

In the claims

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus comprising:
an electronic camera to produce an image signal;
a first user operable control to selectively activate the electronic camera to take pictures;
a plurality of second user operable controls to receive [[an]] corresponding inputs from a user and to generate, in response to the input from the user, a plurality of saliency signals to indicate user interest in a picture, [[the]] each saliency signal to have at least one of (a) a value selected from at least three different discrete values; or (b) a value selected from a continuous range of values;
a circuit to record the value of [[the]] each saliency signal based on the input received via [[the]] each second control contemporaneously with activation of the first control, and to generate a composite saliency signal from the saliency signals;
a memory arranged to store the image signal, the composite saliency signal, and the saliency signals; and,
replay circuitry to replay the pictures such that the pictures having composite saliency signal signals below a threshold are played back in an accelerated manner for accelerated viewing thereof,
wherein at least one operation of the apparatus is controlled based on the composite saliency signal, the at least one operation being different from recording the values of the saliency signals in the memory.
2. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising compression circuitry to compress the image signal to an extent determined by the composite saliency signal.

3. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a buffer to receive the image signal, the buffer having a capacity controlled by the value of the composite saliency signal.

4. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising image selection circuitry to receive the composite saliency and image signals and to selectively pass the image signal based on the composite saliency signal.

5. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising management circuitry to selectively retain in the memory images associated with higher composite saliency levels in preference to images with lower saliency levels.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising management circuitry selectively retain in the memory images associated with higher saliency levels in preference to images with lower saliency levels.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first user control includes a normal picture taking control on the electronic camera.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, further including circuitry to incorporate the composite saliency signal in the image signal.

17. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second user control is part of the body of the electric camera or is physically attached to the body of the electronic camera.

18. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second user control is a remote control for communicating with the electronic camera.

19. (Previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second user control comprises a physically movable control member and a sensor arranged to be responsive to movement of the control member.

20. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second user control comprises a pressure or force sensing transducer to determine the value of one of the saliency signals.

21.-59. (Cancelled)